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TCS 899627/73/1
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8/16/73

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, National Security Council
Intelligence Committee

SUBJECT: Key Intelligence Questions for FY 1974

1. Attached is my list of priority national intelligence subjects and related key intelligence questions for FY 1974. This list represents those substantive matters which I consider to be of greatest near-term importance to the top level consumers of national intelligence.

2. I intend to use this listing, as amended by comments from you and the other NSCIC members, as a basis for assessing the performance of the intelligence community during the balance of the fiscal year, so it is important that the subjects and questions be truly responsive to the important needs of the NSC. I request, therefore, that the NSCIC members, in forming their comments, base their judgments on their needs as consumers of intelligence rather than on their responsibilities as producers of intelligence.

3. In preparing this list of priority intelligence subjects and key intelligence questions, I have three purposes in mind. First, such a listing as amended by the comments of NSCIC members, and future iterations as the world environment changes, will serve as NSCIC guidance to the entire intelligence community. Second, the list will assist each of the USIB participants in determining focal points for his efforts. And, finally, by assigning responsibilities for responding to specific questions on the list I will have a means for assessing the performance of the various elements of the intelligence community.

4. Working from this list, and in coordination with the major intelligence organizations, I plan to derive a program which will maximize the community's performance in providing intelligence responsive to the questions. This program, with its clearly assigned responsibilities, will constitute a set of objectives against which I can measure the performance of the USIB organizations at the end of FY 1974.

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5. The questions do not encompass the entire spectrum of intelligence needs. They are not intended to substitute for NIEs or other types of intelligence estimates. Some matters of continuing importance (e.g., strategic warning of hostilities involving the United States) are not included in this listing. What I have tried to do is identify the subjects on which intelligence inputs are now or shortly will become of highest interest to policy levels of our government. It is an attempt to anticipate the needs of policymakers. The focus is entirely on the world environment during the balance of this fiscal year. Our longer range interests, and the improvement of intelligence capabilities to cope with such, is a separate even though related matter.

6. I would appreciate receiving by 15 September comments from you and the other NSCIC members concerning the key questions and any additions, deletions or re-wording you consider would improve the listing.

15/
W. E. Colby

Attachment

TSC 899627/73, Cy 10

DCI/IC/PRG/JET:vdm 14 Aug 73

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